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AUTHOR Foster, Kathleen
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ABSTRACT

The practicum examined a means of conducting psychoeducational evaluations of children suspected of educational handicaps while expanding the delivery services of school psychology to include consultation, program planning, research, evaluation, supervision, and interventions. Practicum activities included: (1) psychoeducational evaluations focusing on answering referral questions and linking assessments to interventions; (2) demonstration of the usefulness of curriculum-based assessment (CBA) through innovative practice and inservice presentation; (3) a consultation project involving collaborative efforts between teachers of educable mentally impaired students and the school psychologist; and (4) a formative evaluation of current multidisciplinary evaluation team reporting. Reports and logs indicated that assessments had been appropriately modified and that a sufficient number had been done. Structured interviews supported the value of consultation, and the school psychologists gained in understanding of CBA. Positive responses to the intervention project and planned continuance of the model suggested success. The formative evaluation was accepted and used in program development. It was concluded that school psychological service delivery can be expanded while sustaining assessments. Appended are a workload analysis, a CBA checklist, the evaluation team questionnaire, and a summary of the formative evaluation. Includes 71 references. (DB)

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BROADENING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES THROUGH PROGRAM EVALUATION AND MODIFICATION THAT EMPHASIZED CURRICULUM BASED ASSESSMENT

by

Kathleen Foster

Cluster 28

A Practicum II report presented to the
Ed.D Program in Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Gary Engel

Gary Engel

Special Education Supervisor

Shiawassee Intermediate School District

Corunna, Michigan 48817

November 19, 1990
Date

This practicum report was submitted by Kathleen Foster under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved: Polly Peterson, Ph.D.

December 14, 1990

Polly Peterson, Ph.D., Adviser

Date of Final Approval of Report

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Special thanks are extended to my seven school psychologist colleagues who made this practicum possible by their active participation and interest in activities associated with implementation; to my immediate supervisor for the opportunity to implement this practicum; to my family for encouragement to be at the word processor instead of the stove; and to my adviser for modeling a true educator as she facilitated this learning process.

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ABSTRACT

Broadening School Psychological Services Through Program Evaluation and Modification That Emphasized Curriculum Based Assessment. Foster, Kathleen T., 1990: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood. Descriptors: School Psychologists Role / Special Education / Psychoeducational Evaluation / Psychological Services / Psychoeducational Methods / Individualized Education Programs / Exceptional Persons Education / Educational Change / Ancillary Service Delivery / Educational Consulation / Psychoeducational Assessment / Multidisciplinary Evaluation Teams / Child Study Teams / School Psychology / Educational Intervention / Curriculum Based Assessment

The literature suggests that the role of the school psychologist is in the throes of redefinition during the current wave of education reform. This practicum was designed to address the problem of finding ways to evaluate children suspected of educational handicaps while expanding the role of the school psychologist to include indirect services to students as deemed appropriate by professional organizational standards. A primary goal of the practicum was to conduct psychoeducational evaluations at a reasonable number while expanding the delivery services of school psychology to include consultation, program planning, research, evaluation, supervision, and interventions. Objectives fell into two categories: Acknowledgement / substantiation that psychoeducational evaluations are an important aspect of school psychology and expansion of delivery sevices to include simple models in five of the above areas.

The writer ethically and professionally modified psychoeducational evaluations to focus on answering referral questions and linking assessments to interventions. The usefulness of curriculum based assessment (CBA) was illustrated through innovative practice and in-service presentation. A consultation project of collaborative efforts between teachers of educable mentally impaired students and school psychologist was designed. This writer participated in facilitator training and co-facilitated a small group in the public school setting. Two school psychologist interns were supervised. A formative evaluation of current multidiciplinary evaluation team reporting was conducted. Evaluation components were developed and administered in each of these areas.

Results of the practicum were positive and highly consistent with literature implications. Reports and logs indicated that assessments had been appropriately modified and that a sufficient number had been done. A checklist indicated that school psychologists gained understanding of CBA. Structured interviews supported the value of consultation. Positive responses to the intervention project and planned continuance of the model suggested success. The formative evaluation was accepted and used in program development. An intern met university and district objectives under the supervision of the practicum student. Analysis of the data suggested that school psychological service delivery can be expanded while sustaining assessments and that the school psychologist can participate in educational reform through role restructure.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Work Setting

The physical work setting consists of one secondary and two elementary public schools, several elementary parochial schools, and an office building located in a rural county between two large metropolitan areas in the midwest. This writer, employed as a school pyschologist by the county district, is assigned as an itinerant to these schools in a town of approximately 20,000 predominantly Caucasian population. The two public elementary buildings are quite different in nature. One is very large, in a middle class neighborhood with some lower socioeconomic students, regular classes and three classrooms of educable mentally impaired students. The other is a relatively small building in a lower socioeconomic area and houses three classrooms of learning disabled students. Both schools have one classroom of academically talented students.

Writer's Role

As a school psychologist, this writer's primary role is psychoeducational assessment of students suspected to be impaired and in need of special education placement as well as the reevaluation of handicapped students every three years. The assessment process is the only portion of the writer's role that is within her locus of control

and conducted independently. Efforts must be coordinated closely with other itinerant workers as well as teachers and culminate in a written joint report. A multidisciplinary evaluation team (MET) report is prepared with this writer serving as multidisciplinary evaluation team coordinator if the student's primary disability is a learning disability or mental impairment. The MET coordinator's responsibility is to write the report with input from diagnostic team members that include the teachers and parents as well as other "specialists." Decisions about the student's eligibility and programming are made at an individual educational planning committee meeting chaired by a local administrator. It is the MET coordinator's role to interpret the findings and recommendations to this committee. Other duties are basically related to school consultations concerning problematic students. There are increasing expectations of consultation and intervention. Generally, the school psychologist is in the local buildings four and one-half days a week and in the county office one-half day to communicate and do paper work.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

Local school psychologists are experiencing a dilemma in their efforts to serve the mental health and educational needs of children. The role of the school psychologist has expanded with increasing demands on the school psychologist's time, energy, and expertise. Delivery of school psychological services is in the throes of redefinition with a national trend of intervention rather than assessment. Yet, there are a certain number of psychoeducational evaluations that must be done if the district is in compliance with special education guidelines. The average number of psychoeducational evaluations (to determine eligibility for special education services) conducted by local school psychologists has declined in the past few years. Escalation of costs for an average evaluation, carry-over of referrals and reassessments into the next school year, and failure to meet mandated guidelines have resulted in the intermediate school district's identification of assessment as a prime need. Therefore, the local school psychologists are experiencing professional dissonance in regard to accountability to the district or to a profession that requires comprehensive service delivery.

If the problem were solved, school psychologists in the local intermediate school district would be able to sustain an adequate number of psychological evaluations while broadening services. There

would not be a backlog of referrals from one year to another. Timelines would be met. Local delivery of school psychological services would be more consistent with state and national thrust.

The problem is to find ways to evaluate children suspected of educational handicaps while expanding the role of the school psychologist to include indirect services to students as deemed appropriate by professional standards and organizations.

Problem Documentation

On April 21, 1989, the department supervisor submitted a study from office records of evaluations accomplished through the school psychology program from school year 1980-81 through 1988-89. The document (Appendix A) revealed that the average cost per evaluation escalated from $247 to $514 with the budget growing from $182,981 to $280,707. The authorized staff fluctuated from 5.5 to 8 school psychologists during this period of time with the average number of evaluations per school psychologist ranging from 99.6 to 72.8. Although the pattern was not linear, the general trend has been costs going up and "production" going down for the past eight school years. A backlog of reevaluations has occurred. The supervisor requested each school psychologist write a plan for reversing this trend. This study and request suggest that the focus of the department is on psychoeducational evaluations, as no other services were considered in the situation.

It is recognized that guidelines for several categories of educationally handicapped students require school psychologists on the multidisciplinary evaluation team. Professional literature and organizations, however, emphasize involvement with the entire educational system (National Association of School Psychologists, 1985; Hughes, 1989; Mulder, 1989; Michigan State Board of Education, 1986). A pamphlet prepared by the Michigan Association of School Psychologists (MASP) (School Psychological Services, 1990, p. 1) as well as this writer's MASP membership certificate states that the purpose of MASP is "Through research and education, to serve the mental health and educational needs of all children and youth."

At an early fall staff meeting of the 1989-90 school year, it was made very clear that each school psychologist is expected to do a certain number of psychoeducational assessments as each was asked to devise a calendar work plan for the school year with specific numbers of evaluations. "Soft" signs suggest that the staff members are frustrated in their attempts to meet the expectations and uphold professional standards. Additionally, a majority of the school psychologists work without compensation during the summer months writing reports.

Causative Analysis

The causes of the problem are varied. The expense can be the most easily explained. Education costs. Excellence is expensive. Efforts are being made nationally to raise educators' salaries to

professionally competitive levels (Deans, 1988). The school psychologists on the local district staff are highly educated and experienced with annual salary increases based on these factors; supplies, transportation, etc., have increased in cost (Wise, 1989); therefore, it is obvious that evaluation costs would increase.

School psychologists spend an increasing amount of time in meetings such as staffings and Individual Education Planning Committee meetings. (In 1987, Michigan's rules were revised to allow special education personnel to provide pre-referral consultation to regular education personnel in accordance with established procedures ["Revised administrative", 1987]).

The role of the school psychologist has broadened to include consultation, psychological and psychoeducational assessment, program planning and evaluation, supervision, interventions, and research. Consumers (teachers, parents, agencies) are becoming more aware of school psychological services. However, the school psychologist's role and special education services are often misunderstood.

The local district adopted a time-consuming and complicated system of multidisciplinary evaluation team (MET) reporting. The MET incorporates information from each team member (including parent input) and consolidates the information into one report. This requires a great deal of communication, explanation, and running from place to place to obtain input and signatures.

It seems that the referrals have become increasingly complex and reflect "at risk" students. Education, and particularly special

education, are going through a reform wave. These causes are further discussed in relationship to the literature.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Professional and popular literature address the issue of educational reform, using buzz words of innovation, restructure, effectiveness, intervention, research, and collaboration.

Roberts and Cawelti (1984) reviewed several significant formulations of general education (including the Eight-Year Study of the 1930s, Harvard Committee of 1945, Conant Report of 1959, Carnegie Study of 1983) that make significant recommendations on general education. In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education released a report, A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform, that said the nation was in danger because the educational system had been allowed to slip into mediocrity (cited in Deans, 1988), and that America has, in effect, been "committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament" (cited in Power, 1988, p. 17). This report aroused the populace, challenged the schools to redefine general education programs, and gave a national impetus to the movement to require a more academic education for all youth.

Many segments of society entered into the search for solutions; professionals and nonprofessionals became educational critics. A vast number of private, public and legislative groups have analyzed the American educational system and its ability to address the future needs of the country and have concluded that the educational system is in

great need of reform (Knoff, 1989, September). But, nobody really knows if education reform is working. In September, 1989, a landmark education summit between President Bush and the nation's governors resulted in an agreement on the need for comprehensive school restructuring, for systemic change. The participants agreed to work together to help establish national goals (target date: early 1990) in at least seven specific educational areas and to report annually on progress toward achieving those goals (Geiger, 1989). Yet, a report issued by the National Association of Educational Progress on the first anniversary of adopting these national goals suggests that there has been little or no improvement in educational performance by U. S. students in the pst 20 years. In 1990 Michigan passed Public Act 25, a law requiring decisionmaking to improve their schools by teachers, educational support personnel, and administrators at the building level. With a focus on quality education, this bill advocates using incentives, rather than penalities, for development of school improvement plans ("Unwrapping", 1990). When commenting on PA 25, which necessitates self examination, the director of curriculum and instruction of a local school district says that the Quality Issues plan came about more at the urging of business and industry than the educational sector (Leone, 1990).

Although education for the exceptional child has origins in the work of nineteenth-century European physicians (Hallahan and Kauffman, 1886), contemporary special education programs resulted from PL 94-142, the landmark federal law passed in 1975 that entitled disabled children to a public education. It demands a free and appropriate education

within the least restrictive environment as well as an individual education plan (IEP) for each handicapped child. No child is to be rejected as uneducable; each handicapped child is to have a multidisicplinary individual evaluation that is nondiscriminatory and the development of an IEP based on that evaluation. Public Law 94-142 provides the general guidelines for identification of disabilities (Hallahan and Kauffman, 1986; Gartner and Lipsky, 1987). Gartner and Lipsky point out that the advocacy efforts in the 60's and 70's on behalf of persons with disabilities were drawn from the context of the Civil Rights movement and utilized their tactics of producing change in policies and practices through use of both the legal system and the legislature. Consequently, special education programs underwent tremendous growth in the 70s and early 80s (while general education experienced cutbacks and criticism). For example, there was more than 100% increase in the number of children provided learning disabilities services following the implementation of PL 94-142 (Fagan et al, 1989).

To the dismay of many, dual school systems have evolved; yet, there is actually a duality inherent in PL 94-142. The incorporation of a medical view of disability characterizes the disability as inherent in the individual and thus formulates two separate categories of people, handicapped and nonhandicapped, which arbitrarily provides the rationale for educating students with handicapping conditions in separate programs and systems. The analogy has been made of special education and general education as two armed camps with the students prisoners of war (Dawson, 1990, September). Although special education programs of the past decade have brought unserved students into public

education, there has been a failure to overcome the separation between general and special education. Despite a continuum of services designed to meet the needs of the handicapped student, the separate systems have not been significant in terms of student benefits (Gartner and Lipsky, 1987). Laurence Lieberman has been an active presenter and prolific writer whose stance is that the education of exceptional children is not wholly the responsibility of any one group and that every classroom has children with minor handicaps. He strongly advocates that special education is for children who are failing in school because they're handicapped and not for children who are handicapped because they are failing in school (Lieberman, 1984).

Madeleine Will, Assistant Secretary of Education, points out that separate systems have achieved mixed results for some students. She advocates that the pull-out system has a tendency to equate poor performance with a handicap, thus stigmatizes students who are placed in categorical programs, as well as denies services to students who need them but are not "eligible". Other authors point out that the dual system propels the fallacy that poor school adjustment and perfomance are attributable solely to the student, rather than to the quality of the learning environment ("The Regular Education Initiative", 1986). It has been said the only conclusion from many studies of education for students with disabilities is that no conclusion can be drawn. This is partially attributed to a lack of understanding among the concepts of impairment, disability, and handicap and the erroneous use of the terms interchangeably (Frye, Burke, & Lynch, 1990).

Mitgang (1987) reviews the shortcomings that hinder a special education system as mislabeling, easy to enter but tough to leave, race and sex inequities, uneven state standards, haphazard as well as understaffed monitoring, spending backlash, segregation, and stigma.

The debate about where to educate special-needs children is anything but settled. Many go to special education classes but have some subjects in general education. Viadero (1989) reports that most handicapped children attend regular schools but are removed from their classrooms during the day for intensive instruction and assistance by a special education teacher; Gartner and Lipsky (1987) say that 74 percent of special education students are in pull-out or separate programs. Mainstreaming has always been a controversial issue historically. Now a growing number of educators (and parents) are proponents for the Regular Education Initiative (REI), a move led by Madeliene Will, to restructure the regular classroom to accommodate mildly handicapped students, to merge special education and regular education into one system. Ideally, a handicapped child is placed in a regular classroom from the very start with the regular and special educators working closely and collaboratively (Viadero, 1989). The Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children (1986) says the REI might more appropriately be called an initiative to revise instructional program options for low-performing students. Heller and Schilit (1987) describe this movement as an effort to review, improve, and coordinate instruction for students whose learning and behavioral variance can be successfully addressed within general education classrooms. These authors, however, warn that unless efforts

are made to guarantee the fulfillment of certain assumptions (regarding student rights, support from the education community, partnership, attitudes, student grouping, curriculum, instruction, classroom structure, and assessment), educational opportunities for students with special needs will not be improved. Anderegg and Vergason (1988) reported that Wang's Adaptive Learning Environment Model (ALEM) influenced the REI and observed there are serious problems in development of this model that could have detrimental effects on adaptation to the REI. If a REI is to succeed, it will come from a consortium of general and special educators in which collaboration occurs among equals who share a common goal.

The job title of school psychologist first appeared in 1915 (Batsche, Knoff, & Peterson, 1989) with the period of 1955-1985 the most growth oriented in school psychology's history; practitioner growth went from about 1,000 to 20,000 and training programs from 10 to more than 200 (Fagan, et al., 1989). In addition to dramatic growth, the practice of school psychology has undergone many changes in these thirty years (Smith, et al., 1983). School psychologists began to provide services to handicapped children in 1950 according to a state supported plan. Michigan Association of School Psychologists was formed in 1971 (Austin and Adair, 1990).

School psychology has generally been associated with assessment of the exceptional child but concerns about the excessive tie of school psychology to special education classification/placement were expressed over 30 years ago (Reschly, 1988). Although school psychologists usually function as a member of an interdisciplinary decision making

team, studies have shown that school psychologists are among the most influential members of this team because of their "expert power" related to clinical and diagnostic expertise. Federal and state regulations necessitate an emphasis on psychoeducational assessment of handicapped students; consequently, school psychologists have functioned primarily as "testers" or "gatekeepers" for determining who will gain entrance to special education and re-entrance to regular education (Levinson, Fetchkan, and Hohenshil, 1988; Will, 1988). Michigan requires a psychologist on multidisciplinary evaluaton teams (METs) that determine mental and emotional impairment (Michigan State Board of Education [MSBE], 1986). (The system with which this writer is employed also requires the school psychologist to function on the MET that determines learning disabilities.) Fagan et al. (1989) report that practitioners spend at least half their time in psychoeducational assessment activities, one-fourth in interventions, one-fifth in consultation, and 1% or less in research and evaluation.

Yet, no area in special education has caused as much concern as have procedures used for the referral, assessment, and eventual placement of students. Issues include professional judgement, particularly with regard to identifcation of students with learning disabilites, and discrimination, as seen in the disproportionate number of minority and limited-English-proficient students. If there are no obvious physical handicaps, referral generally occurs when student behavior and academic problem varies from the school norm. The most extensive study of the evaluation process, summarized by James E. Ysseldyke et al. (cited in Gartner and Lipsky, 1987), reports that

results are barely more accurate than a flip of the coin, with the evaluation process often providing a psychological justification for the referral. Yet, in keeping with the historic role of the clinical or medical model, there is probably an "over-valuing" of the so-called experts. Reynolds (cited in Lindborg, 1989) associates testing for the purpose of categorizing with proceduralism and disjointedness. He believes that when programs have special constituencies they become narrowly framed and the school psychologist is supposed to study the students and decide what program they're supposed to be in. Reschly (1986) reviews the technical inadequacies of the most commonly used assessment procedures. Most of the school psychologist's instruments lack treatment validity and are irrelevant to the outcomes for which they are intended. Lowell Harp (1989) has concluded that the school psychologist is more of a priest and seer than a scientist as s/he transfers the guilt of educational failure to the possession of a handicapping condition (rather than a shortcoming on the part of the educational community). Interestingly, school psychologists say they would like to spend more time with regular education students and less time with assessment (Smith, et al., 1983).

Trends in credentialing and practice standards for school psychologists tell the history of the rapid growth of school psychology. There has been little or no uniformity of standards. The needs and dictates of the individual states have been the strongest influence in school psychological services. The American Psychological Association developed basic guidelines for certification and training in 1963. The National Association for School Psychologists (NASP) was

formed in 1969 and early established a priority to influence training and credentialing in school psychology; standards were adopted in 1978. This standard model addressed direct and indirect pupil services dimensions and integrated five services: early identification, psychoeducational assessment, program planning, intervention and follow-up. A revised standards document in 1985 integrated five school psychological services (prevention, consultation, training and supervision, administration, and research) with school psychological consumers or liaisons (i. e., parents, teachers, other psychologists, educational personnel and agencies, and resources) at three service levels (individual, groups, and systems). Michigan Association of School Psychologists lists school psychological services as psychoeducational assessment, consultation, direct intervention, education and inservice training programs, program evaluation and development, and research ("School Psychological Services," 1990). Intitiated and adopted in 1988, the National School Psychology Certification System is intended to provide consumers with a consistent level of training and experience, facilitate credentialing (and uniformity) across states, promote continuing professional development, and allow NASP to set standards for the profession of school psychology at a national level (Batsche, Knoff, and Peterson, 1989).

Teachers and educational researchers have sought new solutions to the challenges facing education. They have looked at new ways of studying the processes involved in school learning. Levin and Long (1981) summarize the changes in research priorities. Previously, researchers stressed the effects of relatively stable characteristics

of students or teachers. For example, intelligence and aptitude tests developed to examine the degree to which student characteristics predict scholastic achievement were used to account for difficulties in learning. Much research on school learning has been on relationships between (usually unalterable) variables and student achievement but this emphasis greatly limits the relevance of research as a basis for improving learning. Therefore, researchers have begun to focus on the alterable characteristics of students and their interrelations in the classroom.

The literature provides some evidence of the problem. Athough it is recognized that assessment is a valuable tool for effective schools (What works, 1987), the issues of assessment are clearly controversial. A cover story of the newspaper for members of the National Education Association asks, "Have schools gone test-crazy?" (Weiss, 1988). A professional journal had a special issue with 17 articles relating to assessment ("Redirecting assessment," 1989). Another special series in a professional journal debated the relevance of intelligence testing in the diagnosis of learning disabilities with 13 artices on the topic (Special series, 1989). John Ravens, a noted Scottish researcher, author, and consultant, is currently on the lecture circuit advocating that the nature of assessment must be changed at the point of interface between schools and society. He views the importance of assessment as giving pupils credit for having the qualities which most people connected with the educational system care most strongly about, and looking at eductive rather than reproductive abilities (Ravens, 1989).

The literature indicates that the "refer-test-place-forget" model has not had positive results. Viadero (1989) reports that about 15,000 students are referred for testing and evaluation each week. Studies have shown that if all the nation's school children were subjected to some of the same evaluations and methods of classification, as many as 80 percent could be categorized as learning disabled by one or more definitions presently in use (Viadero, 1989; Gartner and Lipsky, 1987). James Ysseldyke (cited in Mitgang, 1987) says nearly three-quarters of the students tested for special education are declared eligible; yet, the states disagree on what makes a child handicapped. Evidence indicates that most diagnoses of students placed in special education are based on social and psychological criteria, that testing becomes a means of corraborating referral decisions, and that the referral tail is wagging the testing dog.

Almost five percent of the nation's school children are classified as learning disabled, a poorly understood handicap open to 50 definitions (Mitgang, 1987). Despite this epidemic, there is little or no evidence to support the reliability of "learning disability" classification (Reschley, 1988). It has been demonstrated that experienced evaluators could not tell the difference based upon the records between those already certified as learning disabled and those not; students identified as learning disabled cannot be shown to differ from other low achievers with regard to a wide variety of school-related characteristics; one half of the learning disabled population could be more accurately described as slow learners, as children with second-language backgrounds, as children who are naughty in class, as

those with excessive absenteeism or frequent school moves, or as average learners in above average school systems (Gartner and Lipsky, 1987).

There has been little empirical research to indicate effectiveness of special education programs for mildly handicapped children. In fact, the evidence goes in the opposite direction. Study after study suggests that the "pull-out" strategy is ineffective and unsupportable and runs counter to research on effective instruction (Gartner and Lipsky, 1987). The state of Washington launched five pilot REI programs in 1984 with careful planning and adequate support. A final report on the projects found that nearly 67 percent of the participating classroom teachers and 88 percent of the special educators said that the REI was actually better for helping mildly handicapped students and children with learning problems. However, systems that utilized the REI without care and planning had very negative results, Viadero (1989) says. She quotes one teacher, "I believe in the philosophy of mainstreaming but if the support is not there, you can just screw the philosophy."

Education is expensive. Special education is twice as expensive per student as regular education. Annual costs are typically double the average $4,000 spent on each child in public school. Special education is a $20 billion enterprise (Mitgang, 1987). Reynolds (1989) reports that one-fifth of the professional employees of the public schools are now in special education with about $18 billion going into special education in the form of special supports. There are about 300,000 special teachers in the nation and approximately 100,000

additional special school psychologists, social workers, and therapists of various sorts.

Assessment is expensive. In addition to personnel costs, basic tools of the trade are necessary. An itemized list of evaluation materials that the author believes to be minimal to set up school psychological services is estimated at $3821.90. When equipment is added, the costs reach $10,000 for essentials. When a secretary is added, the salary of the school psychologist is probably only about half the total cost the school district would incur the first year (Wise, 1989).

The literature also suggests some causes of the problem. Levin and Long (1981) observe that social and technological changes in modern societies, demand for mass education, and dissatisfaction with schools are bringing about great as well as rapid changes in the school systems of the world. Educators are being challenged to seek ways to adapt education to the needs of all children and to improve the learning of a wide range of students. But institutions are reluctant to change.

Papers written by Drs. Margaret C. Wang, Maynard C. Reynolds, and Herbert J. Walberg (REI,1989) have been influential in current thinking. These educators believe that categorical programs in special education often overlap with Chapter I, migrant programs, and billingual education programs, creating uncertainties about where to place students because these children have in common low academic achievement. The multiplicity of classification systems and programming may have more to do with ineffective identification than with any geniune distinctions in learning ability. Obviously,

eligibility criteria in categorical programs are problematic. The National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) believe that access to special education must be assured for all significantly handicapped children who need and can benefit from it. The other side of the coin is that children are inappropriately diagnosed as handicapped because of a lack of understanding of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, a lack of regular education options designed to meet the needs of children with diverse learning styles, and inadequate measurement technologies. NCAS and NASP further agree that labels are often irrelevant to instructional needs (Regular Education Initiative, 1987). Reynolds (cited in Lindborg, 1989) believes the disjointedness of programs and proceduralism go hand in hand and become part of a general problem in restructuring the schools.

The vast majority (perhaps as high as 90%) of students classified as handicapped in special education settings are mildly handicapped. School psychologists devote at least two-thirds of their time to various services related to classification and placement of these students. Therefore, current reforms strike at the heart of the principal role of school psychologists. Serious questions/criticisms about the reliability, validity, efficiency, and effectiveness of the currrent classification systems and the educational programs for students classified as mildly handicapped affect school psychology, directly or indirectly. The logic and evidence for traditional school psychological services are diminished (Reschly, 1988).

There is an increasing number of "at risk" students. The U. S. Department of Education identified 350,000 children and adolescents as seriously emotionally disturbed; it is believed that one out of six families has a parent with an alcohol or drug problem; 1.7 million cases of child abouse and neglect were reported in 1984 (Crespi, 1989). The relationship to school learning is suggested by these scary statistics: 13% of high school graduates have reading and writing skills below a sixth grade level; 68% of those arrested, 85% of unwed mothers, 79% of welfare dependents, 85% of dropouts, and 72% of the unemployed are considered functionally illiterate; about one million young people drop out of school each year with economically disadvantaged students three times more likely than affluent students to drop out (Knoff, 1989). Another factor has been the narrowing of the definition of what is considered "normal". Gartner and Lipsky (1987) discuss a recent study in ten states that noted referral occurs when student behavior and academic achievement vary negatively from the school norm and observe that the role of the school psychologist gives rationale for special education placements and for the ever-growing identification of deviant, or "at risk" students. The seeking for homogenity in the classroom suggests that nonconformity is dangerous and will lead to special education.

At the same time "at risk" students are increasing, higher standards in regular education are demanded. This contributes to the problem that is addressed in this practicum. The needs of regular and special education students are not being met. National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) standards indicate that school

psychologists provide a range of direct and indirect comprehensive, diverse services which require involvement with the entire educational system with the intent to promote mental health and facilitate learning ("NASP professional", 1985). School psychologists are in a dilemma because accountability is moving from identified district needs to a profession that requires comprehensive and effective service delivery as well as holds itself accountable.

The current emphasis on research base for educational practice is dispelling myths about what does and does not work. Goodlad (1984, p. 22) says, "Research and the transmission of the implications of findings to professionals are the ultimate weapons for fighting myths and quackery." What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning was released in 1986 by the Department of Education as the first major publication of the newly reorganized research and statistics unit. Much of the research comes from the "effective schools" movement that was done primarily to determine what kinds of schools help poor, disadvantaged and minority children the most and can be generalized to any child's education. One of the most important achievements of education research in the last 20 years has been identifying the factors that characterize effective schools; the effective schools research identified five factors that characterize schools that achieve quality and equity (What Works, 1987).

Several different aspects of learning were covered in the literature search. The disciplines of school psychology, special as well as general education, and social sciences have been touched upon. However, school psychology is a "new" discipline and is rarely

addressed in the popular literature specifically. When school psychologists are exterpolated as "support personnel" and viewed in the broad context of education, the popular literature becomes relevant to the problem.

Nationally, all aspects of education are in a wave of change; school psychology is especially vulnerable to the moves to unify general and regular education into a single system. The profession has moved from gatekeeping of special education to include direct and indirect services to all school children. There is an expansion of the traditional role of assessment to include consultation, intervention, supervision, research, and program planning/evaluation. In reviewing the literature of the past ten years it becomes evident that school psychological services are changing out of necessity and that school psychologists must be involved in educational change; must participate in "fixing the system" rather than "fixing the student". In her introductory column as NASP president, Peg Dawson's commitment for NASP to promote alternative service delivery models as well as the active involvement of school psychologists in the restructuring of our nation's schools (Dawson, 1990, September) summarizes the direction of school psychololgy. In a summer retreat, the MASP board adopted its mission statement that included this goal: To promote the profession of school psychology (McGlinchey, 1990). The intermediate school district with which this writer is employed decided to emphasize school improvement rather than program expansion during the 1989-90 school year. The district which is served by this school psychologist adopted

an effective schools thrust beginning 89-90. The state of Michigan passed a quality education bill in 1990.

Summarily, school psychology has moved from accountability primarily as individuals or as part of a school psychological staff focusing on identified district needs to accountability to a profession (Batsche, Knoff, and Peterson, 1989). The ineffectiveness of being a "gatekeeper" for special education is nationally recognized. "Labeling" is a controversial issue and "dual" school systems do not seem advisable. A change of focus is from "fixing the student" to "fixing the system." National trends include regular education initiative, linking assessment to intervention, early intervention models--in general, alternate approaches to traditional delivery systems. School psychologists provide a range of direct and indirect services which require involvement with the entire educational system. School psychology, a costly service, is attaining a national identity. The problems the local school psychologists face are not unique to this district.

The topic of this practicum seems timely in consideration of educational reform that includes expansion of the role of the school psychologist to serve the mental health and educational needs of all children.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

A primary goal of this practicum was to conduct psycho-educational evaluations at a reasonable number while expanding the delivery services of school psychology to include consultation, program planning, research, evaluation, supervision, and interventions. This practicum was to demonstrate the practicality and positive impact that a broader range of delivery services to promote mental health and facilitate learning would have on the local educational system (as well as on school psychologists' job satisfaction). Implementation of this practicum was to increase the intermediate and local school districts' understanding of the role of the school psychologist.

Behavioral Objectives and Measurement of Objectives

Objectives of this practicum fell into two major categories. The first area related to sustaining psychoeducational assessments. In order to expand the delivery service, it was recognized that referrals of students and reevaluations of handicapped children were to be dealt with in an appropriate manner. Specific objectives relating to assessment were:

1. It was acknowledged/substantiated that psychoeducational evaluations are an important aspect of school psychology. As a standard

of achievement, this student planned to write forty multidisciplinary evaluation team reports between February 1 and July 1, 1990. Determination of this objective was to be by numerical count on writer's end-of-year-report submitted to her supervisor in June, 1990. In order to accomplish this objective, some alterations to current methods were needed.

2. Psychoeducational evaluations of students were to be ethically and professionally modified so that referral questions were answered and assessments were linked to interventions. Sufficient data were to be obtained that specifically addressed these two issues on each evaluation. This writer planned to tally on her log if accomplished; results were to be integrated into a qualitative report prepared by October 1, 1990.

The second category of objectives related to expansion of delivery services. Delivery services options were to be expanded by this student who designed and implemented a simple model in five of the six (assessment, consultation, intervention, program planning and evaluation, supervision, and research) service areas recommended by National Association of School Psychologists standards.

3. The usefulness of curriculum based assessment (CBA) was to be illustrated through innovative practice by this writer and the eight school psychologists' gain of understanding of CBA. The evaluation tool for this objective was to be a checklist consisting of ten "yes" and "no" questions pertaining to CBA distributed following a staff presentation; affirmative responses by at least half the participants to 7 out of 10 items on this questionnaire would determine the success.

4. This writer designed and effected a **consultation** project of collaborative efforts to include three teachers of educable mentally impaired students and school psychologist, who would collaborate in eight formal meetings between February 1 and June 6, 1990. This portion of the objective was to be determined by qualitative responses to structured interviews with participating teachers at the end of the 1989-90 school year.

5. This school psychologist's training in an **intervention** program in concert with a local district would model the appropriateness of school psychologists' participation in intervention. Psychologists had not been involved in intervention strategies or projects specific to a local school district; therefore, official inclusion of this writer in a building assistance program and successful completion of facilitator training would demonstrate accomplishment of the objective. It was believed that facilitators would be approved or credentialed by the sponsoring agency. This training would suggest a systematic method of identifying youth whose life situations place them at risk for harmful behavior.

6. This writer would routinely use a systematic method of identifying youth who are at risk for harmful behavior which would be summarized in a self-report submitted with this practicum report.

7. A systematic method of responding to youth who are at risk for harmful behavior was to be established with an offer to students of alternative ways of dealing with problems as a standard of measure. A self report, based on notes from this school psychologist's log, would be the evaluation instrument.

8. Accountability to the profession would be documented by supervision of a school psychologist intern. The supervising school psychologist's responsibility would be to carefully monitor the intern and three times during the school year evaluate specific objectives accomplished by the intern, who would successfully complete internship by integrating theory and practice. Measurement of this objective would be demonstrated by this supervisor's evaluation as required by the intern's university with terminal evaluation conducted in June, 1990, and placement of another intern with this supervisor in September, 1990.

9. This practicum would help ascertain the efficiency and effectiveness of the present multidisciplinary evaluation team (MET) coordination/reporting. The writer would conduct a formative evaluation of local school psychological services that addresses school psychologists' perception of effectiveness of the current delivery system. A written summary including recommendations for service delivery consistent with professional standards was to be submitted to the immediate supervisor by mid-September, 1990 and included in this practicum report.

Evaluation Instruments

Objective 1 (psychoeducational assessments) utilized a form established at the intermediate school district that logs students seen, gives date of birth, date of evaluation, grade level, eligibility decisions, and individual education planning and committee (IEPC) meeting dates. This form was extended for the purpose of addressing

objectives 2 (ethical and professional modification), 6 (identification of at-risk behavior), and 7 (response to these youth), all of which pertain to assessment; these columns were added for checkmarks: referral question addressed, linked to intervention, CBA used, at-risk for harmful behavior and recommendations in addition to educational placement. Information from this log was integrated into a qualitative self-report to be included in this practicum report. This approach would provided the needed information in a relatively simple format.

A questionnaire consisting of ten "yes" and "no" questions pertaining to CBA was developed for assessment of objective 3 (usefulness of CBA). This instrument (Appendix B) was chosen primarily because of its time efficiency.

Structured interview questions were used to determine if objective 4 (consultation) was met. The nature of this consultation project was informal and voluntary; therefore the measurement instrument fit the style. Basically, evaluation hinged on the participants' interest in the model.

The intern's university provided a "Competency Evaluation Performance Review" that consisted of 66 competencies which the supervisor rated satisfactory, needs improvement, or not observed, at four points of the student's internship. Completion of this review determined if objective 8 (supervision of intern) had been met. This rating form appeared very complete and well-designed; therefore, it seemed appropppriate to use as an evaluation instrument.

A simple, open-ended questionaire (Appendix C) was circulated to determine strengths and weaknesses of the MET delivery system as well as

make comparisons with other models and an opportunity for comments. A compiliation of these findings summarized in a written report to immediate supervisor determined if objective 9 (formative evaluation) had been met.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

In order to find ways to evaluate children suspected of educational handicaps while expanding the role of the school psychologist to include indirect services to students as deemed appropriate by professional organizations, this writer gleaned direction from the literature.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) conducted a project 1981-83 for solving a curriculum problem in high schools. Their suggestions can be generalized to assist in solution strategies for most education problems. Roberts and Carwelti (1984) review recommendations to seek consensus on the mission, set policy ensuring periodic redesign, set balance as a top priority, develop an ongoing program of staff development, and provide an organizational structure and sufficient time to ensure development.

A Place Called School (Goodlad, 1984) is an example of the many books that have been written in regard to educational improvement. At the President's and governors' education summit in September, 1989, funding education research and development so that good ideas can be developed and shared around the nation was a fiscal responsibility identified for the federal government (Summit, 1989). What Works, reporting on 41 research findings about what works in the education of children, was published by the Office of Educational Research and

Improvement in 1986 and expanded in 1987 with 18 more research findings. It wrestles "complex research findings into plain language without sacrificing accuracy or validity" (What Works, 1987, p. 1). A mini-series on research in school psychology was published in School Psychology Review to establish a linkage between research and the practical as well as theoretical problems facing the schools and to guide future research questions and methods (Witt, 1987). There appears to be great discrepancy between what school psychologists say and think about research and what they practice. Practitioners need to understand how research findings are applied to practice, consider their own practice as a form of research, and realize how much they have to contribute to the furtherance of useful applied knowledge (Bardon, 1987). Therefore, it seems pertinent to utilize research findings in solution strategies.

It is not special education but the total educational system that must change. While the return to more restrictive settings might be advocated for those with low-incidence handicaps, the more predominant direction is to preclude or limit services to inappropriately labeled students and/or to lower the "barriers" between general and special education--to unify the systems. There would be an attitude change from seeing the education of students with disabilities as different or "special" and the education of "non-disabled" students as normal and expected. Rather than emphasis on placement, the emphasis must focus on the features of instruction that can produce improved learning for students (Gartner and Lipsky, 1987). "Buzz" words in education are innovation, restructure, reform, intervention, and collaboration.

Without question, the wave is to serve mildly (and perhaps moderately) handicapped students in general education programs. While 94-142 requires educational services for students with handicapping conditions, it does not require a special education system (Gartner and Lipsky, 1987).

Madeliene Will (Regular Education Inititiave, 1987, p. 290) proposes these experimental trials:

> Strategies, particularly in the early grades, designed to deliver systematic and organized intervention in the regular classroom, which would tend to prevent identifcation of a child as handicapped.
>
> Curriculum-based assessment.
>
> Classes with individualized programs in which momentary learning problems are not viewed as failures but, rather, as opportunities for further instruction and in which special-needs students could receive instruction tailored to their needs without suffering the negative effects of social stigma.

When she speaks directly to school psychologists, Will (1988 and 1989) talks about their logical and important role in enhancing an effective partnership between special education and regular education to help the increasing number of students at-risk for academic failure. She believes the most logical and efficient place to serve children with learning problems is the regular classroom. Support systems are essential in order to achieve the goals of the Regular Education Initiative (REI) and school psychologists have the capacity as well as expertise to provide an important component of this support system. School psychologists are in a position to promote these areas: support systems for teachers, new instructional approaches, increased instructional time, empowerment of principals to control programs and

resources at the building level. Will claims that the goals expressed in the REI and goals expressed by school psychologists are compatible in that they aim to help students succeed in natural settings. Maheady (1989) says that at least three options are available in regard to the REI: ignore the controvery and issues that surround it, enter the controversy, or acknowledge legitimacy of issues raised by both sides and work systematically and collaboratively.

Reschly (1988) writes what we might assume: A revolution in the nature and purposes of school psychology is anticipated as a result of the special education reform movement. Reschly predicts that there will be a dramatic shift from classification of students or eligibility determination to design, implementation, and evaluation of interventions which can be carried out in natural settings such as classrooms.

Themes of conferences and publications suggest the direction that school psychology is taking. The theme for the 1989 conference of Michigan Association of School Psychologists (MASP) was "Planning for Children at Risk" with in-place programs presented. The 1990 National Association of School Psychologists convention focused on "Expanding Alternatives for Children"; the 1991 convention will be "Celebrating Diversity." NASP has published two volumes of Best Practices in School Psychology and Alternative Educational Delivery Systems: Enhancing Instructional Options fo All Students. Helping Students Succeed in the Regular Classroom was written by four school psychologists (Zins, Curtis, Graden, and Ponti, 1988).

In an interview for Communique, Maynard Reynolds (Lindborg, 1989) talks about "progressive inclusion", a concept of gradually moving to

integration of special education children. As part of the restructuring movement in the schools a core of professionals should have much to say about the governance of the school. Reynolds sees the school psychologist as a very important person in strenthening the capacity of schools to deal with exceptional children. He sees the school psychologist's role being re-examined, stating that the school psychologist, social worker and special education teachers are going to have to develop cohesive, coordinated, coherent support systems in the buildings. The emphasis should be on teaming of professionals and paraprofessionals into collaborative arrangements within the regular classrooms. Reynolds further states that those (including school psychologists) in second system programs have to strongly renegotiate relationships with regular education and try to create more power there to deal with special needs.

In response to the Regular Education Initiative, Surber and Surber (1989) discuss the impact that increased identification of "at risk" students, the demand for higher standards in regular education, and the variety of exclusionary practices will have on school psychologists. In order to meet the needs of both special and regular education students, there is a movement to find alternatives to the "refer-test-place-forget" delivery system, with early intervention models advocated. Popular are Teacher Assistance Teams, intervention assistance programs, collaborative consultation, referral-oriented consultation and peer tutoring. School psychology is a "constellation of positions" which touch curriculum, instruction, law, and supervision/personnel as well as the traditional student advocacy/diagnostic role. This is an ideal

position from which to influence other sub-systems of the school and home communities (Johnston and Berstein, 1989).

However, there are many pitfalls associated with introducing innovative systems in the school setting. To be effective, Surber and Surber (1989) say the school psychologist should consider the procedures for working from the top down, assessing needs, inservicing, establishing resource libraries, piloting programs and networking. Knoff (1989, September) tells school psychologists that the "bottom-up" approach to change is just as legitimate as the "top-down" process and has the advantage of "a well-defined mission, sensitivity to local concerns and conditions, and relatively immediate individual, group, and community commitment and action" (p. 3). Johnston and Berstein (1989) suggest school psychologists initiate organizational changes within a school system. It is their responsibility to assess work environments to find ways of being effective. Organizational consultation could become an accepted part of the school psychologist's daily role.

These suggestions were made for school psychologists who want to guide educational reform in NASP's document "At-risk Students and Excellence in Education: The Need for Educational Restructuring" (Knoff, 1989, September, p. 3):

1. Facilitate the process of planning for restructuring by applying expertise in organizational consultation, group process, problem solving and planning.

2. Integrate services fully into the "general" education system.

3. Provide consultation and planning for effective classroom organization and structures, as well as implementation of effective teaching principles.

4. Assist in modifying instructional practices to make them more appropriate to the social and academic needs of students with

diverse backgounds and characteristics.

5. Develop functional assessment procedures that measure instructional progress and learning outcomes.

6. Participate in developing curricula which promote mentally healthy children and adolescents, including topics of substance abuse prevention and others.

7. Establish procedures for early identification of an intervention for learning, social and emotional difficulties; help develop meaningful, collaborative partnerships betweeen school and home; provide interventions, including parent education, to families where needed.

8. Develop collaborative relationships with relevant community agencies, including medical, social, economic, and family support systems.

9. Apply their training in psychology and research to studying practical problems of instructional and organizational effectiveness and to evaluating the outcomes of educational innovations.

Crespi (1989) encourages educators to begin to consider strategies designed to foster the development of positive learning skills. He suggests that school psychologists have a large array of interventions from which to choose for adaptation in the schools: experiential approaches (such as puppetry, art therapy), psychoanalytic techniques (analysis, clarification, working through), behavioral techniques (parent training, token economies), communication approaches (directives, rules of communication), and strategic techniques (paradoxical instructions, Ericksonian approaches). Michigan Association of School Psychologists (MASP) adopted as a goal for the 1990-91 school year: "Develop and promote effective interventions which address distressing circumstances that impede success and happiness of children and youth" (McGlinchey, 1990, p. 1).

The president of National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) wrote that it is an unfortunate reality that school psychology practicioners tend to work only at the tertiary prevention level. Students are generally referred to the school psychologist because they are not performing academically, or because they are aggressive toward peers, etc., with the primary goal of referral to change the student's progress or behavior, thereby preventing the problem from continuing. Howard Knoff (1989, December) suggests that it is time for the school psychologist to become proactive as well as reactive. It is necessary for the school psychologist to look across referrals to find a broader context which might better explain students' problems and referral situations, generate more effective and efficient intervention programs that focus on group or systemic characteristics or variables, and suggest preventive interventions with children with similar problems. He reminds the readers "for every $1 spent on early prevention and intervention, we know that we can save $4.74 in the cost of remedial education, welfare, and crime further down the road" (p. 3). Knoff and Dawson (1990, October) identify preventive approaches that can and should be organized as well as facilitated by school psychologists: peer counseling and tutoring, cooperative learning, teacher assistance teams, social skills training, home-school reinforcement and collaboration programs, curriculum-based assessment and training. Dawson reported that research has shown what doesn't work (ability grouping, student retention, transitional or readiness classes, and traditional models of special education) as well as what does work (models that improve student capabilities to succeed in the regular

classroom, models that improve teacher capabilities to accommodate diversity, and models that bring services into the regular classroom) in responding to diversity.

The focus of assessments should be on interventions instead of eligibility. The psychoeducational evaluation should be useful for design, monitoring, and evaluation of interventions in order to contribute important and essential services in the new delivery system that is developing. This necessitates fundamental changes in underlying philosophy concerning assessment purposes and practices. The emphasis will be on outcomes criterion (Reschly, 1988). (A workshop on "Outcomes Indicators for Special Education" presented to the ancillary staff of the intermediate school district and planned for the local district special educators [Frye, 1990] supports this direction.) The "tester" must clarify the purpose for which s/he is collecting data and select appropriate measurement tools. Although the technical adequacy of many assessment instruments is questionable, Will (1989) tells school psychologists to improve the instruments and applications, not abandon them. Saltzman (1990) says that a major obstacle to fundamental role change is school psychologists' resistance/inability to let go of testing, to render it incidental rather than central to the profession. The Kaufmans (1985) have devised a brief form of the Kaufman Test of Education Achievement with the reminder that this form should be the instrument of choice unless there are clear-cut, well-defined reasons for administering the longer comprehensive form. There is the acknowledgement that individual testing time is usually at a preminum and that time must be apportioned.

There has been a running dialogue in NASP's newsletter in regard to curriculum-based measurement or assessment (CBM or CBA) (Coates, 1989; Schendel, 1989; Tilly, et al.). There is extensive literature out on CBM; Tilly, et al. (1989) note that over 50 articles on CBM have been published in school psychology and special education journals. An entire book has been written on linking developmental assessment and early intervention for pre-schoolers according to a CBA model (Friedman, 1990). A mini-series on CBA featured in the School Psychology Review (Elliot, 1989) is an indication of how widespread and varied the practice is. CBA can be thought of as "unpublished assessment instruments" that have content, criterion-related discriminant and treatment-related validity. Advocates believe CBM to have a wide range of applications including provision of information for program development, a solid empirical foundation, and a history of successful implementation. CBA can be described as behavior assessment techniques applied to the academic expectations from the regular education with its strengths use of the natural setting, a close tie between assessment, intervention and evaluation (Reschley, 1988). Shinn, Knutson, and Rosenfield (1989) review that CBA is not a set of unified and agreed upon assessment practices but represents a wide variety of strategies that use curriculum materials for "testing" as they compare CBA models. Shapiro (1990) linked together several models of CBA. It seems to this student that CBA can be anything from establishing local norms to making classroom observations as long as material from the curriculum is employed for assessment purposes. Workshops on CBA were presented by two school psychologists at two consecutive MASP conventions (Safranski

and Hannah, 1989 and 1990). The presenters stressed the unique feature of CBA as emphasis on task success and related the satisfaction they experience with this approach. A NASP position paper stresses the evaluation of the match between the learner and his or her educational environment, "assessing the compatibility of curriculum and system as they interact with the child" (NASP, 1985). Another NASP position statement agrees that identification and evaluation methods must include CBA procedures as they provide reliable measures of student performance and produce relevant information for instructional planning (NASP, 1987). There is a place for CBM as well as norm-referenced testing.

Curtis and Meyers (1985) discuss the history of school-based consultation which originated in the 60's due to dissatisfaction with the medical model. These authors relate extensive reviews of research literature to support the effectiveness of the consultation model with examples of positive conditions and outcomes for children. Consultation, however, lacks priority in the profession because of a lack of a common understanding of consultation. Most training institutions fail to address this area. Curtis and Meyers offer a model for consultation which integates behavioral, mental health, and organizational models within a systems framework. Major assumptions regarding effective consultation are reflected in this definition of consultation: "A collaborative problem solving process in which two or more persons (consultant[s] and consultee[s] engage in efforts to benefit one or more other persons (client[s]) for whom they bear some level of responsibility, within a context of reciprocal interactions"

(p. 80). The consultation process is conceptualized in stages of entry, problem clarification, and problem solution.

Zins, Curtis, Graden, and Ponti (1988) believe that it is possible to organize and deliver all school-based special services to students and support for teachers within a consultative framework. Terms which refer to the consultation process include: pre-referral intervention, preevaluation activities, intervention assistance teams, and teacher assistance or support teams. The intervention assistance process should be available to all students, school personnel and parents. Intervention assistance programs have the potential to improve services delivery and to benefit students in a number of significant ways.

The need for evaluation of psychological services in the schools has become apparent but few school psychologists are involved in program planning and evaluation because of lack of appropriate training (Gilberg and Scholwinski, 1983). Conversations with colleagues in some other districts have indicated that numbers in the range of 100-125 of psychoeducational evaluations have been mandated in their districts; the school psychologists are dissatisfied with this mandate. A national survey of practicing school psychologists suggested that little change had taken place in the practice of school psychology despite documented desire for change as well as many suggestions for expanded roles; the question is "Why?" (Smith et al., 1983). Knoff (1990, p. 4) says, "If we are ever going to expand our role to encompass comprehensive service delivery....we are going to have to lead our own reform movement." The 1990-91 president of NASP discussed the vagueness of goals, obstacles that seem insurmountable, and progress that is very difficult to measure

(Dawson, 1990 September) but challenged school psychologists to set a goal of including one activity during the year that will change their role (Dawson, 1990 October).

Summarily, satisfying solutions found in the literature address accountability to the school psychology profession as well as to individual district needs. School psychologists are involved in and advocates for programs such as peer tutoring, teacher assistance teams, in-service training, cooperative learning, regular education initiative, mainstreaming, early intervention, coaching, collaborative consultation, and curriculum based assessment. Testing is being minimized. Research findings are being utilized in practice. School psychologists are becoming active in the restructuring of our nation's schools, but must take the initiative for role change at personal and professional risk. There is now a broader, national perspective of training, credentialing, supervision, and continuing education for school psychologists. Whether from top down or bottom up, change is occurring.

Description and Justification for Solution Selected

A solution to the problem was to systematically and creatively plan ways to evaluate referred children suspected of educational handicaps and to expand the role of the school psychologist to include indirect services to students as deemed appropriate by standards of the National Association of School Psychologists. These services are psychological and psychoeducational assessment, consultation, interventions, program planning and evaluation, supervision, and research. This writer was to

develop an exemplary model that includes each service comprising the delivery system of school psychology that the individual school psychologist with limited locus of control can provide to promote mental health and facilitate learning that is not currently standard procedure in the work setting.

Specifically, this student planned to modify psychoeducational evaluations to focus on referral questions and link evaluation to intervention, conduct a formative evaluation based on the CIPP model (Stufflebeam, 1983) that examines local practices in relationship to current state of the art, supervise an intern, and participate in intervention as well as consultation projects. This solution was chosen because it is within the writer's locus of control, is consistent with research and professional standards, is accountable to the school psychology profession as well as the district needs, and reflects state of the art practice. The CIPP model for program evaluation (context evaluation to inform planning decisions, input evaluation to serve structuring decisions, process evaluation to guide implementing decisions, and product evaluation to serve recycling decisions) was chosen because it is based on the view that the most important purpose of evaluation is not to prove, but to improve (Stufflebeam, 1983), which is a focus of this practicum. The CIPP model is especially appropriate for evaluating school psychological reports that may prove useful in providing consumers with information on the efficacy of the reporting of student assessment methods (Gilberg and Scholwinski, 1983).

Report of Action Taken

1. This writer specifically addressed referral questions and linked psychoeducational evaluations to intervention through techniques such as curriculum based assessment (CBA) and teacher collaboration on psychoeducational evalauations conducted during the second semester of 1989-90 school year. The log was extended for record keeping. The mini-series on CBA in the School Psychology Review and workshop material (Safranski and Hannah, 1989) were utilized to develop CBA expertise. A self-report addressing these assessment issues was written.

2. The school psychologists were verbally polled in January, 1990, as to their familiarity with CBA. None had any formal training or specific experience with CBA. Therefore, it was decided to conduct an in-service training on CBA in the late spring, 1990. This presentation was given to colleagues in May, 1990.

3. This school psychologist organized bi-weekly meetings to include three teachers of educable mentally impaired (EMI) students and available support staff to enhance cognitive, affective, social, and vocational development of EMI students (approximately 45) in a large elementary school.

4. Effort, information, assistance, and encouragement were extended an elementary school staff for the purpose of establishing an alternative delivery service commensurate with the regular education initiative. This writer approached the appropriate administrators with ideas for a Teacher Assistance Team or similar program, which involves teachers helping teachers solve problems, and commitment to work toward

establishment of an in-place intervention program for the 1990-91 school year. As discussions were in process, it was learned that the local district had received a grant for a Student Assistance Program. Through much negotiation, this student's employing district agreed to allow her to take part in facilitator training February 19 through February 22, 1990, and subsequently, co-facilitate a small group in the elementary school setting. This writer attended building level meetings at the target school.

5. Two school psychologist interns were supervised (to provide assistance with evaluations, to stimulate awareness of research, and update practices). This supervising school psychologist geared the interns' experiences to complement the goals of this practicum.

6. Groundwork for a formative evaluation of school psychological services began in the winter of 1990 with collaboration between the supervisor of school psycholol gical services and this student. An on-going evaluation, based on Stufflebeam's CIPP model, proceeded through the summer. In order to increase effectiveness of the evaluation by establishing a base of positive interaction with supervisor and colleagues, this writer circulated pertinent articles, shared examples, and collaborated with staff members. A status report was offered at department meetings on an irregular basis. A written summary (Appendix D) including recommendations for service delivery consistent with professional standards was prepared during the fall of 1990. It was given to the immediate supervisor and to the school psychologists.

7. A self-report was written and shared with practicum adviser. A decision was made to integrate parts into the practicum report rather than attach as an appendix.

8. Literature relevant to this practicum was continually reviewed to the point of redundancy. Popular and professional literature supported the practicum direction. The practicum student attended many presentations to realize opportunities pertinent to the goals of the practicum. A journal was kept during the practicum experience to record progress as well as unanticipated events. Quarterly reports were sent to the practicum adviser.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

This practicum successfully demonstrated that a reasonable number of psychoeducational evaluations can be conducted while expanding the role of the school psychologist to include consultation, program evaluation, supervision, and intervention. Service delivery can become consistent with professional standards through program evaluation and modification.

Objectives relating to assessment issues were the most easily met. It was acknowledged/substantiated that psychoeducational evaluations are an important aspect of school psychology. Forty-three students were assessed by this school psychologist or her assigned intern between February 1 and July 1, 1990 according to log entries and the end-of-year report submited to her immediate supervisor in June, 1990. The writing of forty multidisciplinary evaluation team (MET) reports during this time frame had been chosen as a standard of achievement. The evaluations were ethically and professionally modified in order to accomplish this objective. Each MET report specifically addressed the referral question; generally, the referral question pertained to the student's eligibilty for special education services. Many times the MET went beyond this question but there was a conscious effort by the school psychologist to

not "over test" but to achieve the delicate balance between meaningful and superfluous information. Although initially difficult, it became increasingly more comfortable to tailor each evaluation to the referral and intervention issues rather than use a standard battery of instruments. The objective of linking assessment to intervention became the mindset. Since services are delivered in the schools, it was relatively convenient to incorporate curriculum based assessment (CBA) in the evaluation procedure as long as it was kept simple. Tallies on the extended log to indicate that the referral question was answered, CBA was used, and the evaluation was linked to intervention, indicated the objective of ethical and professional modification of psychoeducational evaluations was met.

The usefulness of CBA was illustrated. Innovative practice by this writer focused on including in each evaluation a simple measure taken from the student's curriculum to see how the student's learning matches the learning environment. These measures were recorded, integrated, and summarized into a "practical applications" package for an in-service presentation orchestrated by this practicum student. The intern school psychologist's presentation on theoretical aspects of CBA provided the other component of the in-service training for school psychologists. One school psychologist was absent from the meeting but there was a participant from another department. A checklist (Appendix B) distributed to the participants overwhelmingly suggested that the objective of the eight school psychologists' gain of understanding of CBA had been met. Whereas success would be determined by at least half the participants responding positively to 7 out of the 10 items, all eight

respondents gave positive responses to at least 9 items. In fact, all responses were affirmative with exception of one "undecided" about a more advanced sesion on CBA in the fall.

The objective of the consultation project of collaborative efforts between three teachers of educable mentally impaired (EMI) students and school psychologist in eight formal meetings was not fully met. One teacher declined to attend but usually there were other participants (regular education teachers and other itinerant staff). The group did meet for the anticipated sessions with discussion of various topics relating to EMI students. Structured interviews with the participating teachers indicated that these meetings had been worthwhile and should be continued into the 1990-91 school year.

The appropriateness of school psychologists' particpation in intervention was modeled. This school psychologist completed a four-day Community Intervention training for being a small group facilitator with a local district team. It was believed that facilitators would be approved or credentialed by the sponsoring agency, but this did not occur. Successful completion of the training was acknowledged by this student's approval by the local school district to co-facilitate a group in the school setting. The writer co-facilitated a Friendship Group of ten third graders for six sessions. The training did suggest methods of identifying youth whose life situations place them at risk for harmful behavior and thus led this writer into the objective of routinely using a systematic method of identifying youth who are at risk for harmful behavior. The self-report was written and is further discussed in the next section.

Supervision of a school psychologist intern illustrated accountability to the profession by carefully monitoring the intern and three times during the 1989-90 school year evaluating specific objectives accomplished in the internship. Completion of the university's "Competency Evaluation Performance Review" indicated a successful internship was served. Another intern was placed with this supervisor in the fall of 1990.

This writer conducted a formative evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of the current multidisciplinary evaluation team (MET) coordination/reporting as perceived by the local school psychologists. Results of the questionnaire (Appendix C) were summarized and presented to the department supervisor (with a copy to each colleague) October 7, 1990. The summary (Appendix D) included recommendations for service delivery consistent with professional standards.

Conclusions

Results of the practicum were positive. It is believed that the goals were met despite the necessity of some adaptation. Locus of control seemed to be a key issue in meeting objectives. The most easily met objectives had to do with the assessment procedure, perhaps because it was within the writer's locus of control. The unmet portions were generally when attainment depended upon another person(s), such as credentialing in regard to group facilitator training and voluntary participation by all three teachers of EMI students. Participation in the intervention project hinged on the school's willingness to follow

through; after the addressed goal (training) was met it was uncertain for awhile if the intervention project would fully materialize. Routinely using a systematic method of identifying youth who are at risk for harmful behavior was a much more difficult task than anticipated; subsequently, a systematic method of responding to youth who are at risk for harmful behavior was even more complicated. When writing these objectives, this student did not take into consideration the range of age and developmental levels of the students served. Obviously, a technique appropriate for an angry adolescent would not be appropriate for a mentally impaired six-year-old.

Much personal and professional growth occurred. The most satisfying parts of the practicum were unmeasured; for example, the feedback from the children in the Friendship Group was super positive. Each literature review or professional development activity reinforced the direction of the practicum. Supervision of the intern(s) increased accountability to the profession, focused attention on state of the art practice and helped translate research into practice. The practicum fine-tuned practice in areas such as test battery selection and teacher communication. It was realized that the scope of the practicum was too broad; actually, concentration on one area of service delivery would probably have been sufficient.

This practicum was conducted from a "bottoms up" perspective. Although there seemed to be many opportunities to integrate into the "effective schools" or "quality education" movements, it was the practicum student's responsibility to realize these opportunities. Negotiation for change seemed very complex because of the adminstrative

matrix of local and intermediate districts. This service provider, whose vulnerability of being itinerant was evident, often had to communicate with several different administrators as well as other service providers before executing a change.

Results of this practicum are similar to literature implications. Gegen (1988) designed a practicum utilizing CBA as part of direct assessment in his school psychological practice and concluded that these procedures are more useful in instructional planning than norm referenced tests; he also gained increased knowledge of curriculum in the process. Knoff's advice to "pull our heads out of the Binet" (Knoff, 1990, June, p. 4) and Saltzman's to "let go of the horse" (Saltzman, 1990, June, p. 18) in reference to changing something perceived as fundamental, testing, are similar to this student's efforts to modify assessment. This practicum is reminiscent of Dawson's advocacy to define yearly goals and devise methods for measuring progress, to develop an immediate set of objectives leading to a long-term goal (Dawson, 1990, September), and to choose one activity to do differently each year (Dawson, 1990, October). The solution to design innovative projects is consistent with Frisby's suggestion for school psychologists to adopt a broader role (perhaps even shape the field) in the thinking skills movmement (Frisby, 1990). The practicum fully supports the posture of state and national professional organizations in regard to role change for school psychology.

A mission statement for the intermediate school district was presented to the total staff in the fall of 1990. Each department was to personalize "Through direct and collaborative services all students shall experience success in learning." One of the support statements accepted

by the school psychology department was "Assist in translating current research into classroom practice." It was a sense of closure to the practicum when the sixth area of school psychological services was addressed. The psychologists are considering responding as a group to NASP's request for volunteers to research effects of retention. Another school psychologist was granted permission to attend intervention training with a local district. The intermediate school district's follow-up of the recommendation to extend the formative evaluation office wide and the department's acceptance of the program evaluation summary as its input into the process indicate that value was placed on that action.

The practicum illustrated that the principal role of the school psychologist as gatekeeper for special education can be changed in accordance with education reform movements. School psychological services were broadened through program evaluation, modification, and diligence. For example, utilizing CBA overlapped these recommended areas of service delivery: intervention, assessment, research and program development. The use of CBA with regular and special education students, inclusion of learning disabled students in a small group co-facilitated with a regular education teacher, and consultation with teachers of general and special education hopefully helped to unify the dual systems. The practicum appeared to positively impact the local and intermediate school districts. The literature review for this practicum provided the impetus for translating theory into practice. The actions taken illustrated accountability to a profession that advocates direct and indirect services to all school children.

Recommendations

It is suggested that school psychologists individually and collectively accept the challenge of participation in their role change. However, less ambitious projects than this practicum are recommended in order to defray "burn-out." Ongoing staff development in regard to the changing role of the school psychologist with innovative projects connected to the workplace's reform movement should be considered.

Dissemination

Furthering the solution in the workplace is occurring. The practicum is already being shared with fellow school psychologists. Follow-through of the recommendations of the report on formative evaluation of the MET reporting/coordinating system is a form of dissemination.

This practicum will not end with this report. Already plans are being made for a Teacher Assistance Team and another child support group. The articles and papers obtained will be collected together to have available for circulation and research. Expanding the role of the school psychologist will continue.

Upon receipt, the bound copy of the report will be shared with other personnel at the intermediate school district. This report seems appropriate for SpecialNet. If invited, it can be included in ERIC. The writer will offer to present at a regional meeting of school psychologists in the spring of 1991. There is also consideration to submit for presentation at MASP (1991) and NASP (1992) conferences.

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APPENDIX A

WORKLOAD ANALYSIS

MET EVALUATION - SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST PROGRAM

WORKLOAD ANALYSIS

	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94
Referrals	330	330	330	330	330	330
Re-evaluations	300	300	300	300	300	300
Pre-School	30	30	30	30	30	30
Carryover	128	167	143	83	23	10
TOTAL	788	827	803	743	683	670
Staff	6.9	8.0 (7.6)	8.0	8.0	7.5	7.5
Rate	90	90	90	90	90	90
Staff Ability	621	684*	720	720	675	675
Evaluations Undone	167	143	83	23	8	-5

*Four months of staff absence

GE/ck
4/19/89

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SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST PROGRAM

	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	
AUTHORIZED STAFF	8	6	5.5	7	7	7.5	8	8	7.5	
ACTUAL STAFF	8.2	5.2	5.9	7.4	7	7.2	7.9	7.8	6.9	
DIFFERENCE	+0.2	-0.8	+0.4	+0.4	0	-0.3	-0.1	-0.2	-0.6	
AVERAGE EVALUATIONS	90.1	99.6	97.6	87.3	89.6	82.8	77.3	72.8		
	182,981	143,338	134,283	190,938	217,641	255,340	285,394	299,370	280,707	336,605
	739	518	578	646	627	596	618	582		
	247	276	232	295	347	428	461	514		

GE/ck
4/20/89

APPENDIX B

CHECKLIST: CURRICULUM BASED ASSESSMENT

Participant Checklist

Inservice Session: Introduction to Curriculum Based Assessment

Presented by Kathleen Foster and Tim Klifman

May 4, 1990

Please check the response that reflects your impresssion.		Yes	No
1. Were the objectives of the inservice session clear?	1.	___	___
2. Was the presented material relevant to your job?	2.	___	___
3. Did this inservice session prepare you to better evaluate students' school functioning?	3.	___	___
4. Do you know where to start with curriculum based assessment?	4.	___	___
5. Do you better understand the rationale for using curriculum based assessment?	5.	___	___
6. Do you understand the evaluator's role in looking at the learning environment?	6.	___	___
7. Has attendance helped you to understand the impact of the curriculum on a student's progress?	7.	___	___
8. Do you think that a presentation at a more advanced level should be offered in the fall?	8.	___	___
9. Please check whether or not you are more comfortable in making academic recommendations for referred students.	9.	___	___
10. Indicate if you're glad you attended these sessions.	10.	___	___

Comments:

APPENDIX C

MULTIDISCIPLINARY EVALUATION TEAM QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is for product evaluation in regard to Shiawassee Intermediate School District's system of Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team reporting. It is part of Kathy Foster's major practicum for doctoral studies at Nova University. The results will be compiled and submitted to Gary Engel for the purpose of improving the system. Thank you for returning it in the self-addressed envelope.

1. What do you see as major strengths of the present system?

2. Describe the weaknesses.

3. Compare briefly with other models you've seen.

4. Suggestions or comments.

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF FORMATIVE EVALUATION

To: Gary Engel

From: Kathy Foster

Subject: Product Evaluation of ISD MET reporting system

Date: October 7, 1990

As you are aware, one of the components of my major practicum for doctoral studies through Nova University was school psychologists' evaluation of ISD's current system of multidisciplinary evaluation team reporting. A questionnaire was circulated amongst the practicing school psychologists; all eight responded.

SUMMARY

Strengths:

Without exception, all cited the major strength of the current system as utilization of the interdisciplinary approach within the school setting. The consolidation of relevant information into one document, perceived as thorough, integrated, and organized, eliminates duplication. Communication between team members is necessitated. The opportunity for input from classroom teacher and parent is insured.

Weaknesses:

Described weaknesses are more diverse but center around the efficiency of generating the report. The process is described as laborious, time-consuming, and awkward. In general, it is believed that the mechanics of writing the report itself (circulation of information amongst team members, consolidation of the material into a draft copy, and recirculation for correction and signatures) create an inefficient process. Specifically, it takes considerable time to get feedback from some disciplines, professional opinions are sometimes restricted, the MET coordinator sometimes has to proof others' work to have a professional sounding report and the final product is sometimes not up to some MET members standards. Thus, the process can foster ill-will between team members. The MET report is almost never available in a timely manner. The more people involved in the evaluation, the more cumbersome and complicated is the MET coordinator's job, and the more likely that deadlines will be missed.

The MET system does not reinforce work done with intervention before the student is referred; in fact, it does not reinforce intervention.

There is lack of time needed to read literature, articles, etc., as well as inablility to administer a specific test when needed due to not enough instruments.

There is concern about typing turn-about time.

Comparison:

Seven of the respondents compared briefly with other models they've seen. The consensus was that a single report is preferred to multiple reports. Several suggested, however, that individual reports be written and then consolidated into a summary or a checklist that provides a picture of the whole child. (Probably only the single document should be distributed.)

Suggestions or comments:

Varied suggestions were offered by only three of the respondents. Two suggested discontinuing the checklist; it was believed that a checklist or incorporation into the report prior to the diagnostic statement would improve the readability and generate more attention to the guidelines. It was suggested that individual contributors be more readily identified.

Evaluator's Recommendations

The purpose of a CIPP evaluation is to improve the system. Therefore, the evaluator will offer some recommendations.

It seems advisable to conduct a similar evaluation with other departments at the ISD contributing to the MET process.

Without question, it seems advisable to continue having a one-document MET report. Each team might try writing the individual reports and consolidating them to see which system is most workable. It also seems that the writer should have the option to incorporate the guidelines in whatever format s/he chooses.

Whereas the concept of an integrated report is preferred, the process or mechanics of generating the written report needs polishing. This might be accomplished by an in-service on Writing the Integrated Report. It also seems that the issues of efficiency and timeliness need to be looked at.

It is hoped that this report will have some value in improving the ISD MET delivery system.